

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 L-03 FRB-03 OMB-01

ITC-01 SP-02 USIA-06 AGRE-00 AID-05 CIAE-00

COME-00 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 OIC-02 SIL-01

STR-04 TRSE-00 CEA-01 SS-15 /087 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7090

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 2164

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECON, EGEN, UNCTAD, AG

SUBJ: COMMODITIES - UNCTAD COMMON FUND MEETING

REFS: A) STATE 179166, B) STATE 191312, C) GENEVA 7068

1. WE ARE UNLIKELY TO BE ABLE TO HAVE MEANINGFUL DISCUSSION WITH GOA UNTIL AFTER RAMADAN WHICH ENDS SEPTEMBER 14. IN MEANTIME WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING LIMITED OCMMENTS ON ALGERIAN POSITION ON COMMON FUND.

2. WE SUSPECT THAT ALGERIA HAS SUPPORTED COMMON FUND MORE OUT OF DESIRE TO MAINTAIN LDC SOLIDARITY AND TO ASSUME A LEADERSHIP ROLE ON NORTH/SOUTH ISSUES GENERALLY THAN OUT OF ANY DIRECT INTEREST IN THE ISSUE. ALGERIA HAS NO OR NEGLIGIBLE PRODUCTION OF MOST COMMODITIES THAT MIGHT BE FINANCED BY FUND. GOA MAY CONSIDER PHOSPHATES AND IRON ORE AS OF FUTURE INTEREST BUT THESE ARE APPARENTLY NOT AMONG THE LEADING CANDIDATES FOR COMMODITY AGREEMENTS, AT LEAST NOT SOON.

3. BEING A MAJOR BENEFICIARY OF ONE "COMMODITY AGREEMENT" (OPEC), ALGERIA CAN HARDLY DENY ITS FULL PUBLIC SUPPORT TO OTHER LDC'S STRIVING FOR MASTERY OVER THE PRICES OF OTHER COMMODITIES. TO DO
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SO WOULD LEAVE ALGERIANS OPEN TO THE CHARGE THAT THEY ARE SELFISHLY SQUEEZING THEIR SISTER LDC'S ON OIL WHILE COOPERATING WITH THE DC'S IN SUSTAINING THE OLD SYSTEM OF WILD FLUCTUATIONS IN THE PRICES OF THE PRODUCTS OF THOSE SISTER COUNTRIES. THE SAME LOGIC CAN BE EXPECTED TO LEAD ALGERIA TO SUPPORT THE MOST EXTREME COMMON FUND PORPOSALS, TO COVER AS MANY COMMODITIES AS POSSIBLE. THIS POSITION MAY BE SOFTENED BY ALGERIA'S LACK OF BASIC DIRECT INTEREST IN

THE COMMODITIES MOST LIKELY TO BE FINANCED BY THE COMMON FUND AND BY THE GENERALLY LESS STRIDENT TONE THAT THE ALGERIANS HAVE EXHIBITED IN THE LAST YEAR OR SO. THIS REDUCED STRIDENCY IS PROBABLY ALL WE CNA HOPE FOR FROM THE ALGERIANS FOR SOME TIME TO COME.

4. WE HAVE FOUND VISITS BY WASHINGTON EXPERTS A USEFUL WAY OF SMO-KING OUT INFORMATION ON ALGERIAN POSITIONS AND THE ALGERIAN POLICY MAKING PROCESS. ALGERIAN OFFICIALS ARE LITTLE INCLINED TO ENGAGE IN GENERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS BELOW THE AMBASSADOR'S LEVEL BUT SEEM WILLING TO RECEIVE WASHINGTON VISITORS, ACCOMPANIED BY EMBASSY OFFICERS. WHILE THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE OF INFLUENCING ALGERIAN POSITIONS GREATLY, A VISIT BY U.S. EXPERT ON COMMON FUND IN OCTOBER MIGHT HAVE A MARGINAL EFFECT AND WOULD AT LEAST ENABLE US TO IMPORVE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ALGERIAN POLICY-MAKING PROCESS AND PERSONALITIES.

5. WE EXPECT TO HAVE MORE TO SAY ON THIS SUBJECT AFTER WE ARE ABLE TO DISCUSS COMMON FUND WITH GOA, I.E. AFTER RAMADAN.HAYNES

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